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Shame in early modern thought: from sin to sociability

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ABSTRACT

This article challenges the historiographical narrative that modernity saw a transition from shame to guilt. I argue not only that these two concepts overlapped, but that, if anything, a shift occurred in the opposite direction: from guilt to shame. I identify two concepts of shame: guilt-shame, focused on sinfulness and caused by mere introspection, and reputation-shame, focused on social norms and caused by the (albeit imagined) gaze of others. Looking primarily at English texts, straying often into the European republic of letters, I argue that in the seventeenth century, as Biblicist fervour gave way to natural religion and a naturalistic turn in moral philosophy, and as burgeoning public spheres needed governing, reputation-shame experienced a new lease of life. This argument, in turn, questions the characterisation of the modern self as private, insulated and autonomous, gesturing instead at open, social minds that were nonetheless deeply, passionately, interiorised. In picking apart these interwoven strands in the history of the concept of shame, I hope to make the methodological point that one cannot be essentialist about concepts. There is no concept of shame that can be analysed abstracted from time and space, only particular uses of the concept in particular utterances.

I

Shame is a peculiarly potent moral concept. In part, that is because it tends to have an affective component, and therefore moves and motivates us, as well as engaging us in consideration of some indecency, or wrongness, in ourselves.[2] It is a feeling of self-reflexive unease that seems so hard-wired that it has a physical manifestation: shame makes us blush, our bodies recording its presence like tears record sadness. One might think that an emotion so primal, so basic to human animals, would have no place in a collection of articles on the *history* of concepts. Indeed, psychoanalysts have wondered why shame seems to be organic, why it seems to be an essential, irreducible feature of being human. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), Freud said that in the 'age of childhood … the sense of shame is unknown', but is an inevitable feature of growing up, both individually and as a civilisation.[3] He proposed in *Civilization and its Discontents*

[1] I am indebted to Edward Skidelsky for inviting me to submit an article for this collection, and for the trenchantly brilliant comments I received in the process of peer review. I am also grateful to Richard Ellis, Laura Gowing, and William Tullett for their invaluable suggestions as the article took shape. This acknowledgement does not do justice to the shamelessness with which I have run away with their ideas.

[2] On shame figured as a passion from antiquity through to early modernity, see Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 5 and passim.

[3] Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. A.A. Brill (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1997), 139-40. For further psychoanalytic treatments of shame, see, for example, Malcolm Pines, 'Shame – What Psychoanalysis Does and Does Not Say', *Group Analysis* 20 (1987): 16-31; Heinz Weiss, 'Introduction: The role of shame in psychoanalytic theory and practice', *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 96 (2015), 1585-8. Cf.

(1930) that when 'man', who had been a beast on four legs, stood up on two, 'this made his genitals, which were previously concealed, visible and in need of protection, and so provoked feelings of shame in him'.[4] And certainly, shame seems to have a deep-rooted conceptual entanglement with sex. One of the possible translations of the Greek word, *aidōs*, is shame, while *aidoia* has been used to mean shameful, or private, parts. This conceptual intimacy also bleeds into Latin, or coy Latin, with *pudenda* – sexual organs, and *pudor* – shame.[5]

Historians, however, students of change, and anthropologists, traditionally explorers of difference, joined the fray by focusing on shame as a contingent, culturally specific phenomenon. In *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples* (1937), Margaret Mead distinguished between shame cultures, in which the sanctions by which an individual is controlled are external, and guilt cultures, in which the sanctions are internal.[6] In a shame culture, one looks out at the eyes of others, and acts to avoid their ridicule or abuse. In a guilt culture, one's gaze turns inward, and conscience is our guide. While the sufferer of guilt experiences 'a disordered state within the psyche', the person who breaks a taboo 'in societies in which the individual is controlled by fear of being shamed … is safe if no one knows of his misdeed'.[7] 'He can', on Mead's account, 'dismiss his misbehaviour from his mind'.[8]

One story the West likes to tell itself is that it has come on a journey from primitive shame to developed guilt – from the world as a kind of theatre, a stage of appearances and shadows, a life lived on the outside, to richly interiorised consciousness. According to this narrative, we have left behind our brutal beginnings in small, tight-knit, face-to-face communities, and entered a more sophisticated condition of individuation and self-regulation in the anonymised, atomised modern state. Here, 'honour killings', for example, are events that take place elsewhere. Historians differ as to the nature and

Julien Deonna, Raffaele Rodogno, and Fabrice Teroni, *In Defense of Shame: The Faces of an Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[4] Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* in *Civilization, Society and Religion*, ed. and trans. Albert Dickson and James Strachey (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985), 289.

[5] On *pudicitia*, see Rebecca Langlands, *Sexual Morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[6] Margaret Mead, *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples* (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1937), 493.

[7] Mead, *Cooperation and Competition*, 494.

[8] Ibid.

timing of the alleged transition. E.R. Dodds made an influential case in *The Greeks and the Irrational* (1951). He described a metamorphosis, 'From Shame-Culture to Guilt-Culture', that took place in the course of the Archaic age, from Homeric heroes concerned with saving face, to the Oedipal guilt that we find in Sophocles and that is integral to the 'cultural inheritance of Western Man'.[9] The same basic narrative was given a very different evaluative complexion in Bernard Williams' classic account, *Shame and Necessity* (1993). Far from applauding the eclipse of shame by guilt, Williams mourns its loss in our conceptual architecture (he does not think that shame has actually disappeared; indeed he thinks it is the only way of properly recognising ourselves).[10] Criticising the psychological simplicity of modern caricatures of shame, he argues that the shame culture of the ancient Greeks was associated with what he calls ethics – a rich and realistic system of normativity that integrates self and other, private and public, and internal and external. Modern Christian-Kantian consciousness, by contrast, deals in guilt, and is associated with so-called morality – a fantasy of reason and will abstracted from real, social, life.

More recently in *A History of Violence From the End of the Middle Ages to the Present* (2012, originally published in French in 2008), Robert Muchembled revisited the story, reinscribing it as a narrative of progress, and proposing that the conversion from shame to guilt occurred in the seventeenth century. Before that time, he writes, 'the law of shame ruled this world, where the regard of others mattered much more than self-regard'.[11] Then, in about 1650, a convergence of judicial, civic, and ecclesiastical forces in a Europe soaked with the blood of war, produced 'a new culture of personal guilt which left less space than before to the collective sense of honour and the law of shame'.[12] Echoing Freud's image of the boy who grows up to be a man, Muchembled argues that as part of the historical transformation he is proposing, 'the West invented adolescence', the new regime of guilt generating repressed young men with a new respect for life, and for the

[9] E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1951), 28, 49.
[10] Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993), 4-12.
[11] Robert Muchembled, *A History of Violence from the End of the Middle Ages to the Present* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 26.
[12] Muchembled, *A History of Violence*, 27.

peace now enforced by 'the institutions proclaiming themselves guardians of legitimate violence'.[13]

This article challenges the conventional narrative. I argue that at the very least there was no clean, sequential transition from shame to guilt, but rather that the two phenomena overlapped, and that if anything, a transition occurred in the opposite direction, that is, from guilt to shame. To be more precise, focussing in on the seventeenth century, I see *two* concepts of shame at work in the textual traces of that period. I am going to focus primarily on England, although I will bring in continental voices insofar as they are relevant, and insofar as I am describing a discursive shift in a pan-European republic of letters. The first concept I will call guilt-shame. This is shame brought about by being seen by oneself, or by God, and tends to have as its object moral wrong, or sinfulness. We find it glowing hot in, roughly, the first half of the seventeenth century, with the gathering austerity of radical Protestantism and its Augustinian, Calvinist emphasis on original sin. The second concept of shame I call reputation-shame. This is shame brought about by being seen by others, or by imagining being seen by others, and it tends to have as its object the conventional values of the community, which might or might not coincide with objective morality, or the law of God, if such things are posited at all. Versions of this kind of shame had been powerfully articulated not only in ancient Greece but in ancient Rome, too, a culture obsessed by honour and civic virtue, and then variously revived in, for example, chivalric, humanist, and early modern gendered discourses. It finds renewed and particular expression in the later part of the seventeenth century, in the intersecting contexts of the modern state, a commercialising, urbanising, institutionalising society, as well as the turn from revealed to natural religion, and the related interest that philosophers began to take in naturalistic explanations for moral motivation and obligation.

The two concepts of shame differ, therefore, in both cause and referent: guilt-shame is caused primarily by an internal spectator and refers primarily to divine morality, whereas reputation-shame is caused primarily by an external spectator and refers primarily to a social ethics. It is my view not only that these two concepts of shame

[13] Muchembled, *A History of Violence*, 29-30. See also 'Shame, and a Challenge for Emotions History', *Emotion Review* 8, no. 3 (2015), 197-206 on 'the decline of shame'; John Braithwaite, 'Shame and Modernity', *The British Journal of Criminology* 33, no. 1 (1993), 1-18.

overlapped in the seventeenth century, rather than following one upon the other, as the established story goes, but also that – now turning the established story on its head – guilt-shame held pole position in certain domains, especially moral thought, at the beginning of century, and had been overtaken by reputation-shame at its end.

These two concepts not only have different causes and referents, but also different evaluative or affective penumbra. In the particular seam of guilt-shame that I excavate, the mood is dark, and full of loathing for, and repression of, the self, and there is no earthly redemption from one's turpitude. Reputation-shame, on the other hand, while it is dreadful in its own way, both in prospect and in actuality, offers an escape route to glory. It is possible, that is to say, to act in such a way, to demonstrate the kind of character, that results in praise rather than blame, and thereby avoid the horrors of social disgrace. Indeed, this dynamic is built into the machinery of reputation-shame. It is in its essence to turn on a dime, the mere flicker of the prospect of censure the prompt to propriety. While shame in both senses has a self-hating and self-inhibitory character, a contrivance designed to make us be, and behave, better, guilt-shame tends towards the irreversibly negative, conclusively unpleasant, twisting us up inside. Reputation-shame, however, is just the other side of credit, self-inhibition simultaneously opening a door onto social life, and to greater security and pleasure therein. Living according to reputation-shame, that is, checking yourself in the light of what others think of you and feel about you, becomes a delicate process of personal recalibration and enrichment, a positive circulation of affect through which we might flourish, a rotation that both feeds off and generates empathy.

Our own use of language still tracks this fissure in the concept of shame. On the one hand, we talk of shame as a problematic, psychologically damaging emotion from which we need to liberate ourselves – the shame for example, of sexual desire, or looking a certain way, or feeling worthless. This is a descendent of guilt-shame, a negative, grimly self-punitive and self-diminishing thing. On the other hand, we talk of people being shame*less*, where that is the worst thing one can be. This is a descendent of reputation-shame. It is a positive, intensely ethical thing. It is what integrates us into society, tying us to other people, as well as tying us back from hurting them. The person who has no shame in this second sense is terrifying because there is no line they will not cross. They do not care what you think. Indeed, they almost thrive on your gaping horror. So locked are they in

the echo chamber of their minds, so mesmerised by their reflection in the pool, that they are unreachable. Here, shame is something dearly to be wished for.

Of course, it need not be this way. The two concepts I have identified need not be approached, or evaluated as I have just proposed. Christians have not always trumpeted guilt-shame as a necessary part of the human condition. Aquinas, for example, having a far brighter view than Augustine of our postlapsarian state, counted it a mortal sin to wallow dejectedly in our defects. This is *acedia*, or sloth, 'a heaviness and sadness, that so weighs down the soul that it has not mind to do anything', an aversion to 'spiritual good'. There is proper 'humility' at our undeniable faults, but this must not be confused with, or tip into, improper 'ingratitude' at the 'good gifts that he has from God'.[14] At the other end of the spectrum, you might be so convinced that you are guilty, and that salvation comes by grace alone so there is no point in being good, that you liberate yourself entirely from moral shackles. This is antinomianism, of which, for example, dissenters were accused by Anglican conformists in Restoration England.[15] As for reputation-shame, far from being an ethically abundant and self-constitutive force, it might be thought to suffocate authenticity, a person having no space to find her own desires, her own path, her values being fixed by society. Reputation-shame might, moreover, amount to the tyranny of the majority, 'the tyranny', as J.S. Mill puts it in *On Liberty* (1859), 'of the prevailing opinion and feeling'.[16] 'There is no reason', Mill elaborates, 'that all human existence should be constructed on some one or some small number of patterns … Human beings are not like sheep'.[17] Reputation-shame, which ties us to the eyes of others, looks in this light like it might herd us into an oppressive conformism. For Jean-Paul Satre, writing just under a century later in *Being and Nothingness* (1943), shame is foundational to self-alienation. 'Shame', as he puts it, 'is the feeling of an *original fall*', whereby the free 'I' confronts the inevitable mediation of 'the Other'.[18]

[14] Aquinas, *Aquinas Ethicus: or, the Moral Teaching of St. Thomas*, trans. Joseph Rickaby, 2 vols. (London: Burns and Oates, 1892), 1: 399-400.
[15] See, for example, Christopher Haigh, ''Theological Wars': 'Socinians' v. 'Antinominans' in Restoration England', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 67 (2016), 325-50.
[16] J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* in *On Liberty and other writings*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 8.
[17] Mill, *On Liberty*, 67.
[18] Jean-Paul Satre, *Being and Nothingness: An essay on phenomenological ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 312.

This foray into alternative semantic worlds demonstrates the methodological point that one cannot be essentialist about concepts. They do not, in some ideal Platonic form, float free of the discourses and embodied realities in which they are articulated. There is no crisply cut concept of shame that one can analyse and define in abstraction for all time. There are only particular uses of the concept in particular utterances at particular times. I have pulled out two distinct uses of the concept in seventeenth-century texts. I have called them two 'concepts', but perhaps that is not right. It is not obvious whether they are two concepts, or rather two distinct configurations of the same concept, one that prioritises introspection and divine morality and judgement, the other that priorities the views of society. They both cluster under the same word. Moreover, the line between these two conceptual configurations is blurred. Self and other are present in both, the internal spectator becoming indistinguishable from the external, and God's law is often present in reputation-shame, even if a social ethics does not feature as obviously in guilt-shame. Concepts are slippery – both within themselves, as with shame, and between each other, as with guilt and shame – and it is part of my purpose to point precisely to their fluid, historically contingent nature.[19] But the task of the historian is also to mediate between the particular and the general, to find patterns and commonalities that do not betray the ineffable specificity of each historical moment, to plot stories that bear legible relations to intrinsically unnarrativised series of events. Accordingly, I want to draw attention to two discrete inflections of shame in the seventeenth century, and to argue that one found a powerful new incarnation at the expense of the other, even as they sometimes melted into each other, and while there were doubtless myriad other contemporaneous inflections of the concept.

In arguing that reputation-shame shunted guilt-shame off centre-stage in the course of the seventeenth century, I am not only challenging the narrative of a transition from a shame-culture to a guilt-culture, but am also lining up alongside those historians who have argued that shame emerged as a distinctive mark and mechanism of modernity. The key figure here, whose thesis runs through much of the current historiography, even as it is criticised and nuanced by it, is the sociologist Norbert Elias. His *The Civilizing Process:*

[19] See Douglas L. Cairns, *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) for a rebuttal of the guilt/shame distinction, and a defence of the psychological sophistication of *aidos*. Cf. Bernard Williams, *Shame and Necessity*, 88-94 on the relation between guilt and shame.

The History of Manners, originally published in German in 1939, then in English in 1969, proposed that 'modern Western man' (him again) was 'civilized' out of barbarism by way of a 'psychical process' that involved a 'change in feelings of shame and delicacy'.[20] In part, what I am offering in this article is an intellectual history to add to the already powerful narrative in social and cultural history about the appearance of shame in the early modern period.

However, my account differs with regard not only to the character of shame – Elias et al's is bound up with the body, whereas mine is (more) focused on morality – but also to the kind of selfhood that is envisaged with the advent of shame. Elias saw the newfound embarrassment about the body resulting in, as well as from, a closing off from the world, a self drawn inward, a '*homo clausus*' or 'capsule' self, an 'autonomous individual'.[21] This image of the newly shamed self as a sealed-off individual intersects with another, still powerful, narrative about modern selfhood more generally. In *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (1989), Charles Taylor, for example, identified 'inwardness' as an integral component of the modern subject.[22]

By contrast, I hope that throwing a light on early modern reputation-shame will demonstrate precisely the outwardness of early modern selfhood.[23] Rather than see the (re)introduction of shame as signalling a withdrawal from the world into an insulated Cartesian ego, I see it as inserting individuals more deeply into an interpersonal space. In this regard – to put the final piece of the historiographic jigsaw puzzle in place – I hope to add something to another classic story about modernity: that it is characterised by the

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[20] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), xi-xiii. See, in criticism and elaboration: Gail Kern Paster, *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1993); David Nash and Anne-Marie Kilday, *Cultures of Shame: Exploring Crime and Morality in Britain 1600-1900* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

[21] Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 258; 257.

[22] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 111. Cf. Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson, eds., *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) which complicates and embodies, but broadly supports Taylor's story, tracking a shift from an open, labile body, to a closed, static body. See also Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

[23] Here I am banding together with cultural historians who emphasise the leakiness, fluidity, and openness of early modern bodies experienced and conceived as *healthy* (as well as, in some cases and contexts, objects of shame). See, for example, Ulinka Rublack and Pamela Selwyn, 'Fluxes: The Early Modern Body and the Emotions', *History Workshop Journal* 53 (2002), 1-16; Michael Stolberg, *Experiencing Illness and the Sick Body in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 128 on the importance of keeping the body 'open'. Cf. Paster, *The Body Embarrassed* on the heavily gendered ways in which bodily secretions were appraised, e.g. the blood of soldiers voluntarily shed was laudable, whereas involuntary menstruation was shameful (64-112).

inauguration of the public sphere. This story, at least in Jürgen Habermas's original telling, has many problems – the eliteness, the maleness, the disembodiedness, the decorum when there was also a lot of bawdiness, as well as the narrowness of the evidence and the categories of class on which it is predicated. However, for all its flaws, the thesis hooks onto a phenomenon that is associated with social and constitutional change, urbanisation, and new spatial, scientific, and textual developments.[24] It seems to me that the renovation of the second concept of shame that I have identified is both further evidence of, and was integral to, the burgeoning public sphere. The sudden spurt of energy in reputation-shame signalled both the need for and the means by which nascent civic spaces might be regulated and animated, and the modern subject governed, in conjunction with formal measures that were instituted for this purpose.[25] It gestures towards how men – and it was archetypically men – might come together in polite conversation, arresting and adapting their values and views according to the circulation of approval and disapproval, of pleasure and pain, and so harmonise their perspectives, as well as make themselves legible to one another. The second concept of shame, that is, facilitated and indicated a new culture of sociability.

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[24] See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989). For rich rethinkings, see Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992); Joan B. Landes, 'The Public and the Private Sphere: A Feminist Reconsideration', in Landes, ed., *Feminism, the Public and the Private* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 135-63; Special Issue, 'Forum: Alternative Histories of the Public Sphere', *William and Mary Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (2005); Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, eds., *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007). See also Peter Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance: Culture and Society in the Provincial Town 1660-1770* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). On cultures of cooperation in the so-called scientific revolution, see for example Claire Preston, *The Poetics of Scientific Investigation in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); *Thomas Browne and the Writing of Early Modern Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Christopher Lawrence and Steven Shapin, eds., *Science Incarnate: Historical Embodiments of Natural Knowledge* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998). For further interrogation and counterpoints, see Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters 1680-1750* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); Helen Berry, 'Rethinking Politeness in Eighteenth-Century England: Moll King's Coffee House and the Significance of 'Flash Talk': The Alexander Prize Lecture', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6 (2001), 65-81; Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (London: Atlantic, 2006); Simon Dickie, *Cruelty and Laughter: Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

[25] On early modern governmentality, see James Tully's classic 'Governing Conduct' in Edmund Leites, ed., *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 12-71. Cf. Markku Peltonen, *The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness and Honour* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Laura Gowing, 'Women, Status and the Popular Culture of Dishonour', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6 (1996), 225-34; *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 111-38; Tim Reinke-Williams, *Women, Work and Sociability in Early Modern London* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

I hope, moreover, to lend my voice to the argument that this kind of public sphere was getting up and running before the eighteenth century.[26] On my reading, for example, John Locke does not mark a contrast with, but rather a bridge to an economy of sympathy. This earlier version of the public sphere should be understood not only as a polite, gentlemanly space, but also as an intensely passionate and intersubjective one. We do not have to wait for David Hume or Adam Smith for a sociable and emotional view of selfhood.[27] In addition to propounding an isolated consciousness, and a radically individuated personal identity (as the philosophy books so often tell it), Locke envisages selves that are open to other selves.

In sum, then, this article is about one particular path that the use of the concept of shame took in the seventeenth century, among the many paths that the concept has taken since antiquity. It seems to me that shame turned its sights up and away from the darkness of one's body and soul, and, with replenished vitality, out into the world. Far from disappearing from view, shame was reinvigorated as a sympathetic instrument of common life, a diffuser of a conventional ethics, in a way that points to remarkably social and sensible, but no less interiorised, minds and selves.

II

In *A Christian Dictionarie*, published in London in 1612, Thomas Wilson motions towards the two concepts of shame that I have sketched above, demonstrating both their distinctness, and their contemporaneity. On the one hand, he defines 'Shame' as 'An affection which springeth, by reason of some civill dishonesty or filthinesse, appearing in

[26] For a few ways into the vast literature on the vibrancy of the public sphere before the eighteenth century, see Adam Fox, 'Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', *Historical Journal* 40 (1997), 597-620; Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000); Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641-1649* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News. How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Judith Pollman and Andrew Spicer, eds., *Public Opinion and Changing Identities in the Early Modern Netherlands: Essays In Honour of Alasdair Duke* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

[27] See Jerold Siegel, *The Idea of the Self: Thought and Experience in Western Europe Since the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Siegel traces a line from Locke, through Mandeville and Hume, to Smith, arguing that with the latter we get 'the most developed' account of 'the relational dimension as essential to the construction of stable self-existence' (167). Siegel finds intimations of this in Locke, in the developing commercial society and republic of letters of which Locke was a part, but stresses the pre-social account of selfhood that arises out of Locke's accounts of personal identity and private property (87-111).

the countenance by blushing.' Here the wrong that gives rise to this emotion is described as a 'civill dishonesty'. That is, this kind of shame occurs in a social context, and the words Wilson chooses to pick out its cause connote that civil context – 'dishonesty', something without honour or credit, and 'fithinesse', something not necessarily moral at all. Here the causes of shame might simply be things that the community finds unpleasant. 'This is', as Wilson elaborates, 'shame of face', the blushing a public, even communicative, act, a revelation to others of a breach of their code.[28] This definition of shame, then, delineates very lightly some of the elements that constitute reputation-shame.

On the other hand, Wilson proffers a further, and slightly more fleshed out, definition of shame that lines up with the concept of guilt-shame that I contend was especially charged at this time. 'Shame' is also, Wilson continues, that 'trouble, and perturbation of minde and conscience, beeing grieved and cast downe at the remembrance of sinne against God.'[29] Here the wrong that gives rise to shame is a real moral wrong. It is sin, and it is the basis of disquiet without anyone else looking, or knowing, regardless of anyone else's moral codes. The only external gaze you might feel is God's, his eyes boring into you, or indeed, God inside you – in the court of conscience, that divinely ordained sense of what is right and wrong, and in the law written in your heart, as St. Paul put it.[30] Indeed, as Wilson summarises, 'this is Shame of conscience', that nasty feeling that occurs far from the public forum, purely on the basis of private self-reflection, and that concerns true iniquity.[31] It therefore comes very close to the concept of guilt, that is, to the state of being objectively at fault, of being guilty as opposed to not guilty, that state that gets to the nub of one's moral position – in a court of law, in truth – regardless of what anyone else might think. Indeed, by the sixth edition of Wilson's *Dictionarie* (1655), he is connecting guilt and shame, defining 'Guiltynesse' as 'a sin or shamefull crime, making us guilty of punishment'.[32] To be guilty is to have committed a sin, and that is, by definition, shameful.

The same distinction between guilt-shame and reputation-shame is drawn by Samuel von Pufendorf in his *De jure naturae et gentium* (1672). There is one sort of shame, on Pufendorf's account, that is concerned with divinely ordained morality, that springs up in

[28] Thomas Wilson, *A Christian Dictionarie* (London, 1612), 442.
[29] Wilson, *A Christian Dictionarie*, 442.
[30] *The Bible*, The Epistle of St Paul to The Romans, 2:15.
[31] Wilson, *A Christian Dictionarie*, 442.
[32] Wilson, *A Complete Christian Dictionary* (London, 1655), 255.

the lonely consideration of evil deeds, and that God has embedded in us to serve 'for a Guard and Defence to Vertue, and for a Bridle to wicked Designs'.[33] However, there is another sort of shame, he goes on to explain, that is neutral with regard to morality, and is motivated by anxiety about the opinions of other people. One form of shame, then, arises 'from the pravity of Actions', and the other 'from any Fact, tho' not Morally Evil, which we think will lessen our Character and Esteem'.[34]

The use of 'shame' to refer directly to, and even synonymously with, sin and guilt, appears in other texts of the period. In *Popish Glorying in Antiquitie Turned to their Shame*, an anti-Catholic tract by William Guild published in Aberdeen in 1626, the close link between shame and guilt is signified in the subtitle: *where-by is showne, how that where-unto they pretend to carrie greatest reverence, they wrong, vilifie, and disgrace; and are most guiltie of that which they upbrayde to others*. The shame of popery is the sin of popery (which is to usurp Scripture's fundamental authority). This direct conceptual line between shame and true wickedness is also evoked in the title of William Yonge's hopping mad denunciation of a civil war revolutionary in a publication dated 1663: *England's Shame: or the unmasking of a Politick Atheist: Being a Full and Faithful Relation of the life and death of that grand impostor Hugh Peters*. While the 'unmasking' referred to in the title is intended in part to destroy Peters' reputation, and therefore speaks to the socially orientated concept of shame, it is also intended simply to reveal, to uncover, the man's guilt. His shame, that is, is regicide.

Shame at one's sin, experienced in the sight of oneself alone, as well as in the sight of God who sees everything, goes back to that foundation story so resonant in the first half of the seventeenth century: the fall of mankind.[35] Before Eve succumbed to the temptations of the devil, and Adam succumbed to the temptations of Eve, man and woman could be naked, and become 'one flesh', and – says *Genesis* – they 'were not ashamed'.[36] After they had eaten from the tree, however, 'the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons'.[37] This is not the shame of a bad reputation. This is not about a break with mere convention.

[33] Samuel von Pufendorf, *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, trans. Basil Kennett (Oxford, 1703), 16.
[34] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 16.
[35] See, for example, William Poole, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[36] *The Bible*, Genesis, 2:25.
[37] *The Bible*, Genesis, 3:7.

Rather, this is shame at one's sin, and disobedience of God's will, which is the only true moral law. Moreover, the shame is not so much about a particular action (though it is a consequence of one) as about the self. Adam and Eve's shame springs from the self-revelation of what they *are*. Their shame is inherent. It cannot be washed away.

It was the contribution of Augustine to turn this moment in paradise into the doctrine of original sin and – I want to argue – original shame, that then gripped so much post-reformation theology. As Augustine explains in *The Confessions* about the lust that plagues him and over which he has no control: 'it was not I who brought it about, but the sin that dwelt within me as penalty for that other sin committed with greater freedom; for I was a son of Adam.'[38] According to this view, sin is an indelible fact of the human condition, and shame its – our – constant shadow, hovering inescapably in solitary consciousness.

This shame at original sin is often focused on its original site: the naked body and the unruly desire it both represents and is moved by. This is why, as Augustine clarifies in *City of God*, the relevant 'members … should be called *pudenda* ('parts of shame')'.[39] The extent to which this shame is rooted deep in human nature is evident, says Augustine, in the fact that 'all peoples' cover their sexual organs; 'barbarians' even keep their loin cloths on when they bathe, and 'in the darkened solitudes of India', naked philosophers 'nevertheless have coverings on their genitals'.[40] Unlike the various values of different cultures, this shame, suggests Augustine, is a universal human phenomenon. The tight connection between nakedness and shame reverberates through to the radical Protestant fervour of the seventeenth century. It is, for example, already apparent in the title of the 1660 Quaker tract, *A Discovery of the Priests and professors; and of their nakedness and shame, which is coming upon them, from their High Profession, to fall as mire in the streets*. The twinned concepts of 'Nakedness and Shame' proceed to echo furiously through the text as the alleged *reality* of the false church is stripped bare.[41] Shame here appears as synonymous with nakedness, and the sin it represents.

[38] Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding, ed. John E. Rotelle (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997), 202.
[39] Augustine, *Concerning the City of God Against the Pagans*, trans. Henry Bettenson (Harmondsworth: Penguin: 1984), 578.
[40] Augustine, *City of God*, p. 579.
[41] William Simpson, *A Discovery of the Priests and professors* (London, 1660), e.g. 3 (twice), 4 (twice).

In *A Mouzell for Melastomus* (1617), an intervention in the English *querelle des femmes*, Rachel Speght picks out all the elements of guilt-shame. It was, she relates, at the moment of Adam's fall that Eve's and his 'eyes were opened'.[42] However, they are not opened to look out at the world, but rather inward, 'the eies of their mind and conscience', as Speght elaborates, regarding their own sinfulness.[43] What they see in themselves is not just the loss of 'that integritie, which they originally had', but also beings riven by civil war.[44] Adam and Eve each felt 'the rebellion and disobedience of their members in the disordered motions of their own corrupt nature, which made them for shame to cover their nakednesse'.[45] Guilt-shame has sin – or guilt – as its intentional object, and it involves being both seen by, and divided from, oneself.

It is worth noting how, in this shame at (original) sin, sin is figured as *desire*. While Augustine is preoccupied to the point of obsession with sexual desire, there is an innumerable array of desires, or cravings, with which postlapsarian mankind is poisoned: the lusts, for example, for 'vengeance', for 'money', 'for victory at any price', and as the Roman Empire testified, 'the lust for domination'.[46] This association, indeed, identification, of sin and desire is going strong at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Thomas Wright, for example, declares in *The Passions of the Minde* (1601) that 'the inordinate motions of passions … are thornie briars sprung from the infected roote of original sinne'.[47] Wright presents the passions not only as obstacles to 'reason', but to 'vertue' too.[48] It is not surprising that the Lutheran Pufendorf makes the same connections. Just as 'our first parents, after the perfect harmony of their affections was disorder'd and impair'd … could not but conceive the deepest shame', so 'our affections', he explains, have been 'depraved and corrupted by the *Fall*'.[49] And the automatic affective consequence of this corruption is the 'passion of shame'.[50]

[42] Rachel Speght, *A Mouzell for Melastomus* in *The Polemics and Poems of Rachel Speght*, ed. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 15.
[43] Speght, *Mouzell for Melastomus*, 15.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Augustine, *City of God*, 576-7.
[47] Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde* (London, 1601), 2-3.
[48] Thomas Wright, *Passions of the Minde*, 2.
[49] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 101.
[50] Ibid.

The self that is generated in this guilt-shame discourse is riven in two. A disobedient, bisected soul is at once the cause of and the retribution for the fall. Desire rebels against the will, or against reason if the will itself corrupted. The body wars against the mind. This means that to live is to experience conflict within oneself. As Augustine puts it, man is 'disobedient to himself', so that 'his very mind and even his lower element, his flesh, do not submit to his will'.[51] The result of Adam's pride 'was not that he was in every way under his own control, but that he was at odds with himself'.[52] Far from winning the freedom he longed for, Adam sold us all into slavery. And it is Augustine's own internal battle that is the thrust of his *Confessions*. In the midst of his struggle to turn to God, he articulates a split self: 'I was the one who wanted to follow that course, and I was the one who wanted not to. I was the only one involved … I was at odds with myself, and fragmenting myself'.[53] One of Augustine's deepest readers, Blaise Pascal, reiterates the division that is at the core of sinful selves. 'Internal war in human beings between reason and passions', he announces non-propositionally in the *Pensées* (written between 1623 and 1662). 'Having both they cannot be without war … So they are always divided and in contradiction with themselves'.[54] Echoing Augustine's *De duabus animabus*, he exclaims that 'the dual nature of humanity is so obvious that there are some who have thought we have two souls'.[55] Pufendorf evokes this sense of persons alienated from themselves when he describes 'wretches' as 'their own punishers'.[56]

In addition to the conceptual attributes of guilt-shame, I want to draw attention to the experience of this moral passion. In the *Confessions*, an exploration of subjective life as much as objective theology, Augustine says that confronted with his own disgrace, 'I felt myself loathsome'.[57] In the *City of God*, he describes the 'feeling of shame' as a 'punishment'.[58] It is supposed to hurt. One of Wilson's elaborations of the meaning of 'Shame' in his *Dictionarie* is 'Punishment or judgement from God, which makes the Sinner ashamed'.[59] Pufendorf brings out the punitively painful quality of this kind of shame.

[51] Augustine, *City of God*, 575.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Augustine, *Confessions*, 202.
[54] Blaise Pascal, *Pensées and other Writings*, trans. Honor Levi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 122.
[55] Pascal, *Pensées*, 124.
[56] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 53.
[57] Augustine, *Confessions*, 198.
[58] Augustine, *City of God*, 580
[59] Wilson, *A Christian Dictionarie*, 442.

Adumbrating the 'horrours and tortures of mind, which are the constant attendants of sin', Basil Kennett, Pufendorf's translator, quotes Thomas Creech's translation of Juvenal's Satire 13: 'nor Hell it self can find/A fiercer Torment than a guilty Mind'.[60] There is no redemption in this life for a particular cast of Christian, no way out of this pain of guilt-shame. It is like a cul-de-sac of negative feeling. Moreover, to be pleased with oneself is a sin. Indeed, this is pride, 'the start of every sin', as Augustine tells us.[61] 'This is why', he goes on, 'humility is highly prized in the City of God'.[62]

The intense displeasure of shame manifests itself in the crushing, please-would-the-ground-swallow-me-up experience of blushing. Blushing is, as John Wilkins states in *An Essay towards a real character and a philosophical language* (1668), 'the outward sign' of several 'inward passions', but generally when our 'countenance' is discoloured 'with a greater degree of redness than doth belong to the natural hue', this is due 'chiefly to Shame'.[63] 'To be ashamed is taken', says Wilson, 'for to Blush'.[64]

What is striking from the point of view of this article is that blushing was thought by some to apply to *both* concepts of shame that I am delineating. It was thought, that is, to apply to guilt-shame as well as reputation-shame, with which it might seem more obviously associated. One might think of blushing primarily as a response to being caught out by someone else, to being seen by the other, or to the idea of being seen by the other, as in Satre's famous red-faced shudder when he fancies he hears a footstep while he peers through the keyhole.[65] Pufendorf, however, is clear that blushing also occurs as a result of pure introspection.

Pufendorf, we remember, explicitly differentiates between the two concepts of shame. Blushing, he says, occurs when we think *either* of 'Evil Deeds' or of things 'which are by no means Morally Evil' but which would harm our 'Reputation'.[66] That we blush in the former instance, at the mere thought or recollection of our turpitude, speaks to the innateness, the extra-sociality, of guilt-shame. The mortifying rush to the cheeks is not a function of culture, but of nature. Pufendorf elaborates on the way in which we have been

[60] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 53.
[61] Augustine, *City of God*, p. 571.
[62] Augustine, *City of God*, p. 573.
[63] John Wilkins, *An Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language* (London, 1668), 236.
[64] Wilson, *A Complete Christian Dictionary*, 565.
[65] Satre, *Being and Nothingness*, 300-301.
[66] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 16.

providentially constructed by God to feel the burn of shame, so that 'our very blood seems to have a natural sense of wicked deeds, which it expresses by spreading a sudden redness over the face'.[67] Blushing, which seems in this formulation to be 'a natural effect from an ill action', is indeed an affective algorithm 'that the most wise Creator has implanted in the minds of men' that arises from 'a Moral Quality'.[68] 'The Passion of shame', embodied in our scorching skin, is triggered here by immorality. Our soul apprehends the evil within and, 'being united by the closest ties to the Body', the body responds.[69] Here, shame occurs in a deeply personal, private space. It is, according to Pufendorf, an automatic, pre-conscious, interiorised experience, veridical in a strong sense, and requiring no spectator other than ourselves – and God.

The internal spectator that generates guilt-shame finds its home, as mentioned above, in the conscience – that internal court, that internal space for the judgement of sin. As Pufendorf explains, 'The Judgment pass'd on Moral Actions by the Understanding, as it is suppos'd conscious of a Law, and therefore accountable to the Law-giver, is commonly call'd *Conscience*'.[70] Conscience is balanced agonisingly between being you, or a part of you, and being God, and its judgement is not a cool, neutral sentence, but rather a harrowing ordeal. Pufendorf refers to the 'gnawings of conscience, and the want of quiet and security, which constantly attend evil men'.[71] This recalls Augustine's experience of battling with his lusts: 'My conscience gnawed away at me in this fashion, and I was fiercely shamed'.[72] Augustine's visceral description of being eaten up inside evokes the fervency of the spectator(s) involved in guilt-shame. He remembers hearing his friend recount the tale of his own conversion, and interjects: 'but, Lord, even while he [the friend] spoke you were wrenching me back toward myself, and pulling me round from that standpoint behind my back which I had taken to avoid looking at myself. You set me down before my face, forcing me to mark how despicable I was, how misshapen and begrimed, filthy and festering. I saw and shuddered'.[73] Here is the split self so characteristic of guilt-shame appearing in a new guise, now intercut with God. This

[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 21.
[71] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 117.
[72] Augustine, *Confessions*, 199.
[73] Augustine, *Confessions*, 197-8.

'shame of conscience', as Wilson calls it, occurs not through the optic of others, but through the cracked optic of our selves and our maker.[74]

The final point I want to make about guilt-shame is its attitude to the opinions of others. It is not only the case that the internal, self-spectator matters, but that the external spectator does not. Indeed, to be concerned with one's reputation is a sin in itself. As Montaigne says in his scathing essay 'On Glory', 'there is an indescribable pleasure in being praised, but we value it far too much'.[75] He goes on:

> 'I am not so much worried about how I am in the minds of other men as how I am to myself. I want to be enriched by me not by borrowings from others. Those outside us only see events and external appearances: anyone can put on a good outward show while inside he is full of fever and fright. They do not see my mind: they only see the looks on my face'.[76]

Here, value resides not in the praise or blame of others, but in the quiet, closeted, cultivation of a good soul. Here, indeed, is the closed self, not drawn inward by embarrassment, by an acute sensitivity to public judgement, as Elias would have it, but rather precisely by a rejection of that sensitivity as a worthy sentiment. Pascal picks up on our morally perilous desire to live through the eyes of others. 'We are not satisfied with the life we have in ourselves in our own being', he declares, 'we want to lead an imaginary life in the minds of other people, and so we make an effort to impress. We constantly strive to embellish and preserve our imaginary being, and neglect the real one'.[77] Pascal rails against our obsessive embrace of the false self, constructed for others, at the expense of the real, internal self. 'Vanity' – 'the desire to be esteemed by those in whose company one is' – hollows us out, so that we come to care nothing for true virtue, for generosity, or loyalty, but instead chase its image, its mere simulacrum, even to the bitter end. We have returned to pride, albeit a different species. We saw it criticised as grotesque self-regard. It now re-emerges as pleasure at the admiration of others. As Pascal mourns, 'pride takes hold of us so naturally in the midst of all our wretchedness, errors, etc., that we even lose our lives joyfully, provided people talk about it'.[78] This

[74] Wilson, *A Christian Dictionarie*, 442.
[75] Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, trans. M.A. Screech (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2003), 710.
[76] Montaigne, *Complete Essays*, 711.
[77] Pascal, *Pensées*, 147.
[78] Pascal, *Pensées*, 124.

manic concern for what other people think of us is *part* of the sin that shames us. As St. Matthew enjoins: 'Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them'. This injunction 'not to sound a trumpet before thee' in order to garner the 'glory of men' runs deep in the Christian tradition.[79] The hunger in a man after 'others praises' is 'Pride', explains Wright, whereby 'self-love and vanity possesse the best tenement of his heart'.[80] Bound up with the concept of guilt-shame, then, is the sin of vainglory and an injunction *not to care* what other people think of you. Or to put it another way, guilt-shame here unfolds itself in direct opposition to reputation-shame, to which I will shortly turn.

But first to recap: the kind of shame that I have sketched in this section abjures and retreats from the limelight. It looks inward, at the sin that ferments insistently in our souls, that moves our bodies in ways we cannot control. We feel it on our own; we feel it even when our eyes are closed. And if we feel other eyes on us, they tend to be those of God. This is a shame that baulks at the desires that drive us, thereby dividing us from ourselves and hampering our agency. It is, I want to suggest, the antecedent of the negative concept of shame that, more or less slipped from its Christian moorings and doubtless undergoing further and overlapping histories, remains in use today: shame about some perceived unworthiness, or wrong, or flaw, in ourselves, such as masturbation or menstruation – shame that diminishes and isolates us, and is no good at all.

III

Sometime in the seventeenth century, it seems to me that another concept of shame, or at least a new configuration of a concept that had been in use since antiquity, was expressed. This alternative concept is a descendant of 'shame' as it had been defined by Aristotle, 'as a kind of fear of dishonour'.[81] Given a new lease of life by participants in the developing public sphere, it thrived into the eighteenth century. If we think back to Wilson's *Christian Dictionarie* of 1612, we remember that he proffered two concepts, categorically distinguishing between them: 'an affection which springeth, by reason of some civill dishonesty or filfthinesse', which I have called reputation-shame, and 'trouble,

[79] *The Bible*, 6:1-2.
[80] Wright, *Passions of the Minde*, 218-9.
[81] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross, J.L. Ackrill, and J.O. Urmson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 104.

and perturbation of minde and conscience', which I have called guilt-shame and which I have argued was having quite a moment in the heat of Protestantism.[82] However, if we turn to a dictionary first published in 1702, John Kersey's *New English Dictionary*, guilt-shame has fallen away from the page, apparently edged out by the alternative, socially-oriented concept.

'To shame', Kersey explains, means 'put to shame or disgrace.' 'Shameful', he elaborates, means 'infamous or disgracefull'.[83] Immediately, we can see that the concept has spun outward to face the world. Rather than the bitter fruit of solitary experience, it here appears as the product of social infamy and disgrace. Significantly, too, Kersey adds the antonym of 'Shamelessness' to his lexicon: 'a being shameless void of shame or impudent'. The introduction of shamelessness as the opposite of shame marks a further distinction in the configuration of the concept. It inaugurates, or resurrects, the idea of shame as something desirable, rather than something undesirable that it would have been better never to know, a hateful thing that was unfamiliar to Eve and Adam in the garden. The concept of shamelessness, and indeed the possibility of it, gestures towards shame as a form of virtue, the social glue that regulates communities, its absence rather than its presence now a horror.

Interestingly, 'shame' does not feature at all as a lexical item in Edward Phillips's dictionary when it is first published in 1658. It is only in the sixth edition of 1706 of *The New World of Words: Or, Universal English Dictionary* that the term first appears, and when it does, it is characterised exclusively as a social phenomenon. While reputation-shame had long been integral to various discourses, it is striking that it should arrive in this way in this instance at the dawn of the eighteenth century. Phillips defines 'Shame' as 'an uneasiness of the mind, upon account of having done something which is unseemly, or that tends to lessen one's esteem among others; also disgrace or reproach'.[84] Note here not only the other-directed character of the emotion, but also its dialogical component – others shame me, just as I might shame, or 'reproach', them. By the time we get to Samuel Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language*, published in 1755, guilt-shame has been eclipsed as a species of shame. 'Shame', states Johnson, '1. The passion felt when

[82] Wilson, *A Christian Dictionarie*, 442.
[83] John Kersey, *A New English Dictionary, Or a Compleat Collection of the Most Proper and Significant Words Commonly Used in the Language* (London, 1702), n.p.
[84] Edward Phillips, *The New World of Words: Or, Universal English Dictionary* (London, 1706), n.p.

reputation is supposed to be lost … 2. The cause or reason of shame; disgrace; ignominy … 3. Reproach'. Moreover, underneath we find the following entry: 'Shameless. Wanting shame; wanting modesty; impudent; frontless; immodest; audacious'.[85] Pithily and unambiguously, then, shame appears here as concerned with reputation and communication. And, again, the light has changed. Gone are the thunderous clouds; now shame is something to be wished for. If we turn to Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* first published four years later in 1759, we meet the same insistence that 'shame' *per se* presupposes 'the idea of some other being' and therefore is only conceivable, and only exists, in society.[86]

Top of the list of authors that Johnson cites for usages of the term 'shame' is Locke.[87] This appears to me as no accident because it is in Locke that we find one of the most pivotal and strident accounts of the reputation-shame that I see being sturdily refreshed during this period. In *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, first published in 1689, Locke announces that there are three species of moral law, that is, three different sets of rules by which human beings regulate their actions. The first is God's law, the breach of which is sin. The second is the civil law. The third is 'The Law of Opinion or Reputation', the particular customs and fashions which obtain in particular cultures, and which differ from place to place. For a law to count as a law, it must have a means of 'enforcement'.[88] It must, that is, have rewards and punishments attached to it, otherwise it would be just words. One might think that God's law, with its sanctions of eternal fire and bliss forevermore, or the civil law, with the prospect of the hangman's noose, would press most heavily on our wills. It turns out, however, that it is the law of reputation, the breach of which brings shame, and the observance praise, that motivates us most powerfully. Acknowledging the shock that this assessment of human motivation might give to his readers, Locke rebounds with the claim that those who imagine that 'commendation and disgrace' are not 'strong motives on men' are themselves 'little skill'd in the nature, or history of mankind: the greatest part whereof he shall find to govern themselves chiefly, if not solely, by this law of fashion'.[89] I will quote Locke's explanation for this view at

[85] Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols., London, 1755, n.p.
[86] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie, Indianapolis, 1982, p. 193.
[87] Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols. (London, 1755), n.p.
[88] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 352. For an excellent analysis of Locke on reputation, see Tim Stuart-Buttle, ''A Burthen too Heavy for Humane Sufferance': Locke on Reputation', *History of Political Thought* 38 (2017), 644-80.
[89] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 356-7.

length because it gives a sense of the phenomenological texture and power of reputation-shame. Few men, says Locke, 'seriously reflect on' the consequences of sin, and people think they can evade the surveillance of the state:

> 'But no man scapes the punishment of their censure and dislike, who offends against the fashion and opinion of the company he keeps, and would recommend himself to. Nor is there one of ten thousand, who is stiff and insensible enough, to bear up under the constant dislike, and condemnation of his own club. He must be of a strange, and unusual constitution, who can content himself, to live in constant disgrace and disrepute with his own particular society … no body, that has the least thought, or sense of a man about him, can live in society, under the constant dislike, and ill opinion of his familiars, and those he converses with. This is a burthen too heavy for human sufferance: and he must be made up of irreconcilable contradictions, who can take pleasure in company, and yet be insensible of contempt and disgrace from his companions.'[90]

For Locke, shame clearly trumps guilt in explaining human motivation. In his view, people do not care about the pricks of conscience so much as the shame of ostracism. They are no longer looking down into the well of sin, but rather out at their peers and betters. Shame has shifted from having a fundamentally introspective inspiration to a social one.

This kind of shame, especially with regard to sexual behaviour, has often been thought of by historians in asymmetrical gendered terms – as something more swiftly imposed, and more pressingly felt, by women than by men.[91] Certainly, the author of *Her Protection for Women* (1589), who went by the name of Jane Anger, raged against the fact that a woman 'is most certain to be bereaved of her good name, if there be any small cause of suspicion' of infidelity.[92] Indicating the more general fragility of, and penetrating preoccupation with a woman's honour, the author of the explosive *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*

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[90] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 357.

[91] See Keith Thomas, 'The Double Standard', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 20, no. 2 (1959): 195-216; Bernard Capp, 'The Double Standard Revisited: Plebeian Women and Male Sexual Reputation in Early Modern England, *Past & Present*, 162 (1999): 70-100; Johanna Rickman, *Love, Lust, and License in Early Modern England: Illicit Sex and the Nobility* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008); Martin Ingram, *Carnal Knowledge: Regulating Sex in England, 1470-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[92] Jane Anger, *Her Protection for Women To Defend them Against the Scandalous Reportes of a late Surfeiting Lover* in *The Women's Sharp Revenge: Five Women's Pamphlets from the Renaissance*, ed. Simon Shepherd (London: Fourth Estate, 1985), 38.

(1696) explained that she wanted to be anonymous on account 'of the tenderness of reputation in our sex'.[93] A woman's name was so brittle that this particular woman decided to protect it by hiding it altogether. We now know that this woman was Judith Drake. She, like Anger before her, gestured at the long-standing, and negatively charged, concentration on a woman's shame.

What Locke and others demonstrate is not only the wider scope of social shame, but also the particular, positively charged form of the concept, appropriated for male advantage, that walked taller as the seventeenth century wore on. Lockean shame or 'the uneasiness of the mind' at the thought of acting in such a way that will 'lessen the valued esteem, which others have for us', need not torment us irredeemably.[94] Anxiety about being liked does not have to stagnate in us and infiltrate our souls with self-loathing, but can flow into the pleasure of actually being liked. There is in this alternative discourse of shame, the prospect of circumventing it and even, especially if you are lucky enough to be born a gentleman, of recovery from it. Reputation-shame has mobility built into it; the unpleasant and lonely sensation of real or imagined shame is transmutable into the pleasure of glory and companionship, and within this the possibility of a flourishing and, *pace* Elias et al., an *open* self. Indeed, an openness to others, an interest in their approval, is for Locke, integral to what it means to human, without which one cannot be said, to return to the above quotation, to have even the barest 'sense of a man about him'.

As Locke suggests, it is not – or not exclusively nor necessarily – sin that is the object of reputation-shame, but rather the conventional codes of one's particular culture or community. These might not be moral, but simply things that bring social disgrace. Thomas Hobbes, for example, who has an arguably dismissive, or at least ambivalent, attitude to sin *per se*, and is a great champion of reputation-shame, avoids all moral connotations in his formal definition of 'shame'. It is, he says in *Leviathan* (1651), 'griefe, for the discovery of defect of ability … the passion that discovereth it selfe in blushing; and consisteth in the apprehension of some thing dishonourable'.[95] In *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), Hume, so often reminiscent of Hobbes, right down to the wryness, lists some of the possible objects of pride and humility in a catalogue of unmistakable

[93] *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex, In which are inserted Characters of A Pedant, A Vertuoso, A Squire, A Poetaster, A Beau, A City-Critick, &c.* (London: 1696), preface, n.p.
[94] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 232.
[95] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 43.

moral neutrality: 'our country, family, children, relations, riches, houses, gardens, horses, dogs, cloaths'.[96]

In Hobbes' comment we re-encounter the blush, the sign we have already met, somewhat surprisingly, of guilt-shame, now reappearing as the sign of reputation-shame. Here it manifests less unexpectedly as prompted by the (albeit imagined) gaze of the other. For Francis Bacon, in his *Sylva Sylvarum* (1627), the two effects of 'Shame' are '1. blushing; and 2. a downcast look', the latter because one 'cannot endure to look stedfastly upon' others, to meet the others' eyes.[97] Blushing in this context is intricately bound up with the public gaze. It is the outward mark of the passion, an excruciatingly, involuntarily, communicative act, whereby we become 'Shame-faced', exhibiting 'Shame-facedness', to draw now on Kersey's inventory of shame-related words.[98] To be ashamed is not just literally to go red in the face, but metaphorically to lose face in one's community.

What is especially noteworthy about blushing in relation to reputation-shame is not only the way in which blushing is figured as morally neutral, resulting from some defect, any defect, of which the community disapproves, but also the way in which one might sometimes blush for things that are not one's fault, and, conversely, might not always blush for things that are. As Locke says, 'Shame … has not always blushing accompanying it', gesturing to the uncertain, even non-veridical, nature of the sign.[99] Nicolas Coeffeteau, whose *Tableau des passions humaines* (1620) was almost immediately translated into English and published in London in 1621, and who describes 'shame' as 'a griefe and a confusion, which growes from the apprehension of some crosses, which may make man infamous', goes on to enumerate a broad array of things that might make a man blush, including those things over which he has no control.[100] 'Men blush', for example, 'when as they are forced to do or suffer things'.[101] 'Shame riseth', Coeffeteau elaborates, 'from a beleefe which wee have to bee wounded in our reputation' – regardless of whether the disgrace is justified or morally significant.[102] Pufendorf, whom we remember

[96] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, eds. L.A. Selby-Bigge and P.H. Nidditch, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 277; 279.
[97] Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum* in *The Works of Francis Bacon* (London, 1815), vol. 2: 6.
[98] Kersey, *A New English Dictionary*, n.p.
[99] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 232.
[100] Nicholas Coeffeteau, *A Table of Humane Passions with Their Causes and Effects*, trans. Edward Grimeston (London, 1621), 473.
[101] Coeffeteau, *Table of Humane Passions*, 481.
[102] Coeffeteau, *Table of Humane Passions*, 485.

distinguishes between two kinds of shame that map onto the distinction I am proposing, is clear that the second kind, that arises from things which would be 'hurtful to our reputation', include those things 'which are not endued with any moral quality'. So it is, he enlarges, that 'we see many persons who cannot forbear blushing at their lameness, or baldness … at some particular diseases, at poverty, bad cloaths, at faultless ignorance, or at harmless mistake'.[103] Blushes, then, and the reputation-shame of which they are so often the sign, appear variously untethered – from morality, from responsibility, and even from each other. And the intensity of reputation-shame finds *its* origins in the 'extraordinary pleasure', as Pufendorf puts it, that human beings take in being thought well of by their neighbours.[104]

The fixation with the admiration of others that underpins reputation-shame is not always celebrated by the authors that spell it out. Their criticism brings them into lockstep with the proponents of guilt-shame whom we saw castigate people for vanity and pride. Pufendorf is a case in point, as one might have predicted. For him, fervent concern for one's reputation is a vice in itself, powered by the fact that 'man is a most ambitious creature, and highly conceited of his own excellency', who likes nothing more than to 'brag, and swell, and carry himself above the dimensions of his neighbours'.[105] Pufendorf's sideswiping at reputation-shame is evident not only in his substantive disparagement but also in the formal way in which he structures his presentation of the two concepts of shame. Shame at immorality, what I have called guilt-shame, which rushes upon us even in isolation, is introduced first – as true shame, as it were. Reputation-shame is then brought in secondarily, as an aside. 'Besides, we ought to observe, that shame do's not only arise from the pravity of actions', says Pufendorf, introducing reputation-shame as the lesser relative. This vision of guilt-shame as the dominant, proper form of the passion, overshadowing and belittling reputation-shame seems emblematic of the relative supremacy of guilt-shame in a particular stratum of post-Reformation discourse. But it also speaks of a shift in the discourse, of a hint of the rejuvenation of reputation-shame as a vital and distinct concept in moral discourse.

[103] Pufendorf, *Law of Nature and Nations*, 16.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.

While Locke moves reputation-shame centre-stage, as we have seen, we can still discern in him echoes of Pufendorfian denunciation. It is Locke's ambivalence about reputation-shame, coupled with his presentation of it as the ultimate motivator, that makes him a pivotal figure in my narrative. A big fan of Pufendorf as well as sincerely Christian, Locke would like it if men cared more about their duties to God rather than their reputations, about sin rather than disgrace. Both his discomfort and his long-term preoccupation with the law of fashion are evident if one looks at an early manuscript from 1675 entitled 'Philanthropy or The Christian Philosophers'. There he bemoans 'Example & Fashion being the great Governours of this world'.[106] 'The Question', he goes on, that 'every man ought to aske in all things he doth … is, how is this acceptable to God?' But instead, most of us, problematically, wonder 'how will this rend[er] me to my company'? The problem with the law of reputation is compounded insofar as Locke thinks, at least when he is deep in his destructive, anti-innatist polemic in Book I of the *Essay*, that the law of reputation often diverges from the law of nature, or true morality. As he states in the *Essay*, the divine law 'is the only true touchstone of moral rectitude'.[107] The customs across different countries and different times, however, vary wildly and atrociously. 'There are places', announces Locke, 'where they eat their own children', and others where 'they have not so much as a name for God'.[108]

However, in other moods, Locke suggests that the law of reputation might not be such a bad thing. When he comes, now in hedonic and constructive mode, in Book II to explain how we actually come by moral ideas, he explains that 'since nothing can be more natural, than to encourage with esteem and reputation that, wherein every one finds his advantage; and to blame and discountenance the contrary; 'tis no wonder, that esteem and discredit, virtue and vice, should in great measure every-where correspond with the unchangeable rule of right and wrong, which the law of God hath established'.[109] Since God wants mankind to be preserved, and each man wants preservation for himself, God and man recoiling as one at murder or theft, for example, the laws of nature and reputation tend to run in parallel. In this way the law of reputation might be seen as doing God's work. Moreover, sin figures differently in Locke than it does in Pufendorf. For the

[106] Bodleian MS Locke, c. 27, fol. 30r.
[107] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 352.
[108] Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 71.
[109] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 356.

Englishman, sin is not woven irrevocably into our beings in such a way as to make being alive a state of necessary shamefulness. Instead, Locke is sceptical about the very idea of original sin.[110] It is no wonder, then, that no longer dragged down by an inevitably revolting self, he can turn his attention to the alternative, and lighter, sense of shame. Indeed, it seems to me very relevant that the decline of guilt-shame and the rise of reputation-shame for which I am arguing coincide not only with new kinds of public spheres, but also with the arrival of natural religion.

This shame that looks out, rather than in, that is unburdened by the weight of (original) sin, tends to be part of a positive, uplifting discourse. The motor of reputation-shame is fuelled by the pleasure of a good reputation, and drives the invention of moral fibre. As Wilkins says, 'our names, and the esteem we have amongst good men' are 'instruments of vertue'.[111] While the concept of guilt-shame outlined above was of course in part a bridle to sin, and a spur to duty, there was no way of avoiding original sin, no way of escaping, that is, the sinful feelings of uncontrollable desire. Nor was the bridle to sinful actions a pleasant experience. It was only ever punitive. Of course, reputation-shame *per se* is not pleasant either, but it readily holds out the prospect of pleasure, or of the transformation of itself into pleasure in the warm embrace of one's community. Reputation-shame is just round the corner from glory. Under his enumeration of 'The Instruments of Vertue', Wilkins lists a pair of options – 'REPUTATION, credit, countenance, applause, name, honour, vogue, report, fame … glory, renown', and 'INFAMY, disgrace, discredit, dishonour … shame, ignominy, stein'. These counterparts are as much in dialogue with each other as they are in opposition, informing each other as two sides of the same coin in the generation of virtue. Disgrace is a flip of the coin to credit. With our eyes as fixed on the furrowed brows as on the applause we will win the 'goods of fortune'.[112] Hobbes makes the intimacy of shame and glory explicit: 'shame', he says, is a 'signe of the love of good reputation; and commendable', before adding wryly (and twisting Aristotle) that it ceases to be commendable 'in old men', 'because it comes too late'.[113] In the *Natural History of the Passions* (1674), an anonymous text generally attributed to Walter Charleton, 'shame' is explicitly linked to 'glory' as a sister virtue, both

[110] See, for example, Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity* in *Writings on Religion*, ed. Victor Nuovo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) 85-225, 91.
[111] Wilkins, *Essay Towards a Real Character*, 201.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 43. Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 105.

are called 'good and laudable', and contrasted with 'vicious insensibility of honor' – evoking the *good* of shame, and the correspondent horror of shamelessness, the traces of which remain in our lexicon.[114] And by 1700, in William Ayloffe's *The Government of the Passions According to the Rules of Reason and Religion*, 'Shame' is being described as the 'innocent passion' that protects all the virtues'.[115]

This is shame played in a major key, the chords of which were sounding with renewed vigour towards the end of the seventeenth century. It is in this context that the more famous melodies of the eighteenth century make sense. Perhaps the most arresting of these was performed by Bernard Mandeville in *The Fable of the Bees* (1714), which set forth the full moral and social potential of 'the notions of honour and shame'. Mandeville posited that by 'making use of this bewitching engine', naturally self-interested human beings might be induced to work towards the public good.[116] Hume's positive spin on reputation, and the discursive complex of vanity and self-enjoyment of which it is a part, hoves memorably into view in *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, first published in 1751. There, attacking 'superstition and false religion', he mocks 'celibacy, fasting, penance, mortification, self-denial, humility, silence, solitude, and the whole train of monkish virtues'.[117] 'Pride', as Hume had already explained in the *Treatise*, is wrongly thought of as a 'vice', and humility as a 'virtue', a view perpetuated by 'the schools and pulpit'.[118] Undoubtedly, Hume stood apart from many of the conventional moral and religions opinions of his day, and Mandeville was a satirist. Nonetheless, in valorising, or harnessing, the power of shame, and its intimate partner glory, these authors present a different kind of music to the strains we heard in Augustine.

The idea of reputation-shame, and the endorsement of it, has deep roots. The deepest of these go back to antiquity, as in Aristotle, who describes it as a 'quasi-virtue' (only 'quasi' because it is passion rather than 'a state of character').[119] As Locke says, the law of

[114] Walter Charleton, *Natural History of the Passions* (London, 1674), 97, 99.
[115] William Ayloffe, *The Government of the Passions According to the Rules of Reason and Religion* (London, 1700), 106.
[116] Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: or Private Vices, Publick Benefits* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund), 43.
[117] Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* in *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge and P.H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 270. See Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before its Triumph* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977) on the evaluative revolution whereby negative passions were recast as positive interests in the eighteenth century.
[118] Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 297.
[119] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 104.

reputation can be found in 'the heathen philosophers'.[120] Perhaps the most important figure here for early modern readers was Cicero, whose *De Officiis* was almost a bible, and who envisaged a world in which honour and the good might go happily hand in hand. In Cicero's organic account of the dawn of civilisation, he explains how men gathered together in cities, and how laws and justice were developed, which in turn 'led to a softening of men's spirits and a sense of shame'.[121] This is a kind of shame that civilises, tempering and mollifying our brutal inclinations – that is to say, exactly the opposite of the kind of force that the tenacious shame to guilt narrative suggests, according to which brutality is replaced by civility. Shame here enables us not only to stay alive, but to live together in a delicate and respectful way. Cicero locates 'a sense of shame' alongside the duty to 'be mindful of the way we behave towards men', and lumps both these under the headings not only of what is 'honourable', but of 'virtue' too – which two categories are themselves continuous with each other.[122] And sure enough, nestling alongside this positive characterisation of shame is a celebration of 'glory' which, if 'true', is grounded in 'justice'.[123] Reputation-shame was subsequently modified and commended in multiple interlocking discourses. Chivalry, for example, argued Maurice Keen, was an 'ideology of honour'.[124] And the words of Cicero, of course, alongside other pagans, were woven into renaissance humanism. And as Keith Thomas has phrased it, honour and reputation were among the 'ends of life' in early modern England.[125]

It was this positive take on reputation-shame that prospered anew in moral philosophy in the mid to late seventeenth century – as did the sense of self that it generated. Far from being excluded by reputation-shame, as the standard anthropological/historical typologies have it, a sophisticated and densely interiorised self was something that might flourish within it. Pursuing esteem, and acutely sensitive to disapproving glances, we find ourselves – in the most sympathetic accounts – growing in integrity and legitimate self-love. This comes across especially strongly in Hume, who places 'pride and humility' first among the passions. These are opposite, and twinned, feelings that operate in a kind of

[120] Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 356.
[121] Cicero, *On Duties*, ed. M.T. Griffin and E.M. Atkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 68.
[122] Cicero, *On Duties*, 39, cf. 37.
[123] Cicero, *On Duties*, 79.
[124] Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (New Have, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 253. Cf. Stefanie Trigg, *Shame and Honor: A Vulgar History of the Order of the Garter* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).
[125] Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 147-186.

dialectical relation to either augment or diminish the self. Indeed, for Hume, pride quite simply 'produce[s]' the idea of the self; it 'never fails' to do so.[126] Note that the *kind* of self produced by pride is, by definition, confident, content – a self not divided in self-loathing and the repression of one's own desire, as we saw with guilt-shame, but rather capacious, unified, integrated in self-worth, and in a celebration of passion.[127] Moreover, these causes of pride and humility do not operate particularly powerfully on us until we filter them through the lens of other people's eyes – when they come vividly alive. This is because 'our reputation, our character, our name are considerations of vast weight and importance'. Things of which we might be proud or ashamed have, as Hume explains, 'little influence, when not seconded by the opinions and sentiments of others'.[128]

As the last quotation suggests, then, the modern self that emerges here is open rather than closed, constructed in the public rather than the private realm, the external shaping the internal rather than carved off from it. One can trace a historical movement, that is, from the idea of a solipsistic being consumed by guilt-shame, to one radically open to other people, and *therefore* – if managed right – individually robust. The selves of others take up a kind of residence in one's own self, and one's own self, in turn, takes up residence in others. For Hume, the reason why we particularly love having a good reputation is that the pleasure of those who hold us in good repute transfers itself to us. It does this through the mechanism of 'sympathy' – that natural operation 'which renders' the sentiments of others 'intimately present to us', that 'quality of human nature' of which there is none 'more remarkable', whereby everyone, 'even the proudest and most surly take a tincture from their countrymen and acquaintance.'[129] We love praise so much, that is, not only because we *understand* with our reason that other people approve of us, but also because we *feel* their pleasure.[130] Approval and disapproval, praise and blame, are for Hume species of pleasure and pain, and their expression, or imagined expression in others, sets up a reverberating pleasure or pain in us. 'The pleasure', concludes Hume, 'which we receive from praise, arises from a communication of sentiments'.[131] Smith

[126] Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 287. See Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, ''Pride produces the idea of the self: Hume on Moral Agency', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 3 (1990), 255-69.
[127] See Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003) on the mind-body relation in the enlightenment, and p. 331 on Hume in particular.
[128] Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 316.
[129] Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 320-1, 316-7.
[130] Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 320-1.
[131] Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 324.

takes up Hume's theory of sympathy in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, explaining that 'fellow-feeling' arises when we re-experience the feelings – or copies of the feelings – of others, when, 'by the imagination', as he puts it, 'we place ourselves' into the situation of another, and 'enter as it were his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them'.[132] And again, as for Hume, our pursuit of praise is bound up with our fundamental openness to one another. According to Smith, we want others to feel the same pleasure, the same 'agreeable sentiments', about us that we feel when we approve of them.[133] The preoccupation with reputation, then, finds fertile ground in a post-Lockean metaphysics where passions – like other ideas – immigrate, reaching into us from outside, and circulate between people.

The final aspect of reputation-shame that I would like to signal is its capacity, indeed its purpose, to temper and regulate the mushrooming public sphere – the coffee houses, city streets and businesses, scientific societies and salons, or, simply, the 'five or six friends meeting at my chamber' who encouraged Locke to work out the precise limits of human understanding in an endeavour that became the *Essay*.[134] This kind of regulatory shame does not gruffly, brutally manoeuvre its population; it does not operate only on the surface of selves, as the caricature of shame-cultures would have it. Instead, it subtly nudges us towards decent, seemly behaviour, working dynamically in and out of subjectivities, creating governable subjects who are simultaneously self-governing and stoutly interiorised. In his encyclopaedic taxonomy of all things, Wilkins lays out the 'Vertues relating to the due moderating of our actions'. First of these is 'Dignities and Esteem; in respect of the Avoiding or Suffering of Disgrace', and among the things to be avoided are 'Shamelessness' (again, that formulation that figures shame as a good thing), 'Audacity, fancy, immodest'.[135] Locke is committed throughout his *oeuvre* to the government of communities – of families, the republic of letters, and civil society, as well as the commonwealth. It is no surprise to find that he, whom we have already met as a key witness to the great force of the law of reputation, looks to shame as an indispensable tool of gentle control. In *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, published posthumously in

[132] Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 9.
[133] Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 114.
[134] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 7.
[135] Wilkins, *Essay Towards a Real Character*, 209.

1706, a work dedicated not only to the proper conduct of our minds but of our selves in community with others, Locke considers those times when we are gripped by some passion, so that our thoughts become clogged and unfree, and we are unable to engage in meaningful discussion. The 'shame' that this kind of distance and distractedness causes 'to well-bred people, when it carries them away from the company, where they should bear a part in the conversation' is both proof of its wrongness, and a prompt to its eradication.[136]

There is a danger that reputation-shame will promote at the very least a morally vacuous agenda, at the worst an emphatically corrupt one. If reputation-shame simply embodies the contingent customs of a particular community, if it ebbs and flows with the arbitrary whims of the majority, then it might descend into the blind leading the blind. However, its proponents are aware of this precipice. Locke, as I have indicated above, is sometimes anxious about the ways in which the law of reputation diverges from true morality, and even when he is in more sanguine moods, he thinks that while it regulates society pretty well, it can always be nudged into better order. It is often thought shameful, for example, not to know what a word means that someone else has uttered, and so we nod, and maybe even smile, and carry on none the wiser. But, insists Locke, ignorance of this sort should not be a source of shame.[137] Our conversations, as well as knowledge and society, would go much better were we all to own up to the things we do not know. Shame, then, need not be a blunt, myopic instrument, but might instead be a flexible, sensitive, and urbane device of social reformation.

This dual-aspect of reputation-shame – regulating communities while itself being subject to ethical self-regulation – developed in detail in the moral philosophy of the eighteenth century. Hume reins in his moral subjectivism when he explains that it is proper to praise not so much that which brings us personal pleasure but rather that which pleases us when we take up a 'common point of view', when we find that perspective which is the 'the same to every spectator', or as he puts it more strongly and strikingly, that appeals 'to the esteem of a judicious spectator'.[138] Smith enjoins us to 'remove ourselves, as it were, from our own natural station', establishing 'a certain distance' between ourselves

[136] Locke, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, ed. John Yolton (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1993), 130.
[137] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 522.
[138] Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 591; 581.

and our moral sentiments, 'endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people', and re-make oneself as an 'impartial spectator' of oneself.[139] The driving desire for a good reputation is not fuelled simply by our craving for the admiration of others, but also by our wanting to know that we *deserve* that admiration. Smith draws a distinction between 'the love of praise' and 'praise-worthiness', and stresses that the former is hollow without the latter.[140] We work out whether we merit approval by emptying ourselves of the vagaries of our particular, partial passions and interests, by trying to see ourselves from the outside. Habermas long ago argued that publications such as Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *Spectator*, first published in 1711 and expressly designed to offer the viewpoint 'rather as a Spectator of Mankind, than as one of the Species', were instrumental in establishing the public sphere that he takes to be definitive of enlightenment.[141] While Habermas' thesis has been criticised and revised, it is clear that the spaces for, and the ethos of, socialisation were changing. It seems to me that this transformation, together with the introduction to moral philosophy of the idea of an unbiased spectator, who somehow stands both externally from and within us all, is closely bound up with the revivification of reputation-shame. The spectator moderates, legitimises, and strengthens our interest in our how we are seen, as well as gesturing towards a self that is extremely porous. Far from emptying out the self, then, the preoccupation with reputation-shame brings the outside in, creating a private space that is simultaneously intensely intersubjective.

IV

I began this article with a broad-brush historiographical picture of modernity as involving a shift from shame to guilt, from hollow to replete selves, from public to private lives, and, to pick up Williams' distinction, from ethics to morality. I have argued by contrast that two concepts – guilt-shame and reputation-shame – can be discerned side by side in the seventeenth century. Guilt-shame is the tormented sense of one's own sinfulness, a function simply of being alive, brought on by mere introspection or, connectedly, being seeing by God who dwells within and without. Reputation-shame is the anxiety that one's behaviour might break the rules of one's community, and is set in

[139] Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 110.
[140] Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 114.
[141] *The Spectator*, Number 1, Thursday, March 1., 1711, 1^{v}. See Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 42-3.

motion by the fear of being disapproved of by other people and – close on its heels, almost indistinguishable from it – the eagerness for praise.

My thesis has been that these concepts not only jostled next to each other, but that if there was a shift at all, it was in the other direction, that is, from guilt-shame to reputation-shame. This is not to say that reputation-shame was a new thing; its traces are ancient. Instead, my contention is that while guilt-shame was galvanised by Protestantism in the early to mid-seventeenth century, reputation-shame was revitalised towards the century's end, on account of the conjuncture of the rise of natural religion, the decline of Biblicism, and a corresponding naturalistic turn in moral philosophy, as well as the need to regulate the incipient public sphere and incarnate the centralising state.[142]

Moreover, the self that emerges in *this* civilising process, is neither the empty shell often associated with shame (as opposed to guilt), nor the closed off individual often associated with modernity. The self that I have sketched in the context of reputation-shame is both abundantly interiorised and radically open to the community, bringing the outside in, and in turn feeding the inside back out. Locke is often presented as a pioneer of the idea of autonomous modern selfhood, a developer of the Cartesian ego and the theatre of the mind. It is true that for him the understanding is, in his words, 'a closet wholly shut from light', with the exception of the little windows of the senses. However, it seems to me that he also envisages bridges and walkways between rooms, paved, in part, by the law of reputation, a kind of spaghetti junction of opinion and affect.[143] The self that stepped into the eighteenth century was widely ajar, and filled up precisely by social interaction. Having one's eyes on others did not stop one's eyes also turning inward in a dynamic of self-constitution. Furthermore, this was an integrated self, not alienated from its own sin, or desire, racked by self-division, but rather a self made whole by the circulating twinned forces of glory and shame. The desire for reputation, in this discourse, was not something to be ashamed of, nor the pleasure of self-approbation something to be avoided.

Stepping back now from this excavation, it is clear that concepts are not cleanly discrete entities, but rather blend into each other. The two discourses that I have unearthed in this article often amalgamate. Guilt-shame, for example, might involve anxiety about what

[142] For an exploration of the transformation of scripturalism, see Kevin Killeen, *Biblical Scholarship, Science and Politics in Early Modern England: Thomas Browne and the Thorny Place of Knowledge* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).
[143] Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* 163.

other people think, as well as the pain of one's own conscience. Reputation-shame might refer to sin as well as impropriety – concepts which often coincided in this deeply Christian age. And both guilt-shame and reputation-shame are species of shame, that is, they both pick out the idea, the horror, of being seen negatively – while shame more generally has a porous semantic relation to guilt. Moreover, the configurations of, relations between, and evaluative penumbrae around concepts mutate through time and across speakers. As I have noted, many authors who acknowledged the power of reputation were sceptical about its worth. John Bunyan, writing *A Pilgrim's Progress* contemporaneously with Locke, thought conformism the very devil; the best people being pilgrims on this earth who 'fear not what men say'.[144] Or for Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his *Second Discourse* (1755), it was the moment when 'everyone began to look at everyone else and to wish to be looked at himself, and public esteem acquired a price', that 'the first step' was taken 'toward inequality and vice'.[145]

Concepts sprawl. Their deployment is inconsistent. This is why they can only be analysed historically, as contingent and divergent products of language in use. They are not the kinds of things that can be subject to abstract analysis, like water, or gold. They are mercurial. In the case of shame, there is no essential, or definitive, concept. Instead there are myriad, overlapping, and contradictory uses, and I have taken core samples from two strains of use at particular points in history. Just as concepts are creatures of history, so might they be lost to it.

If, however, I turn my eyes momentarily and finally from the past to the present, I see the remnants of these two uses of shame in our own speech, albeit somewhat distorted. We talk of feeling shame about features of ourselves that we cannot escape, such as looking or lusting a certain way, where the shame is thought of as a punitive, unwarranted thing resulting in misplaced self-loathing. And we talk of shamelessness with regard, for example, to the new breed of self-confessed post-truth politicians. It sometimes feels in the twenty first century, as neoliberalism bites and social media dissociates, as though

[144] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress. From this World to that which is to Come the Second Part* (London, 1684), 199.

[145] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men* in *The Discourses and other early Political Writings*, ed. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 166. See Christopher Brooke, *Philosophic Pride: Stoicism and Political Thought from Lipsius to Rousseau* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 201 on *amour-propre*, and more generally for a powerful argument on the tension between Stoic pride and Augustinianism that intersects with the argument of this article.

the sand is covering over that particular interpretation of shame that took it to be a peculiarly good thing, that understood the deliberating gaze of the community to be a thing of value and a guarantor of virtue.